

Theatre Orangeville celebrates 30 years in community

By Constance Scrafield

Theatre Orangeville will offer new initiatives area students to mark its 30th anniversary year.

Thanks to Theatre Orangeville supporters, every child who attends the theatre as part of a school program can come to shows free of charge, with \$100 to help with bussing costs.

During COVID, many children lost opportunities to attend live performances.

The goal, according to Artistic Director David Nairn is to enable 3,000 to 4,000 kids to enjoy live theatre.

Theatre Orangeville offers subscriptions for five or three shows per season, plus the add-on at the beginning in September, for focusing people on coming back to the theatre.

Nairn says theatres are critical in creating gathering spaces and places to share a creative experience.

'It's in our DNA,' he reasoned. 'We are hard-wired to be together. Now, we remind people that humans have always come together to listen and tell stories.'

This year, Nairn says the facility is licensed for Friday and Saturday performances with their sponsors, Adamo Estate Winery, Hockley Valley Brewery Co. and Pommies Cider for the whole theatre and the lobby upstairs.

The concession can now accept payments by cards.

Theatre Orangeville's Stage to Screen brings the theatre productions to screens at home for anyone not wishing or able to come in person. People living anywhere can access this system. Productions are seen in real time, with the 270 people sitting in the theatre.

'We need to remind ourselves who brought us here?' the patrons. For the last 30 years, we've been telling stories about Canadians with plays written by Canadians,' he said.

The 2023-2024 season opens with *The View from Here*, starring Jamie Williams and Melanie Janzen is first, from October 12 to 29. A married couple, this comedy by Mr. Williams is about a couple wondering at life's differences from their expectations; you can count on the laughs.

Over the holidays from November 30 to December 23, is Theatre Orangeville's first Panto: *Cinderella...If the Shoe Fits*.

Nairn laughs at the mere mention of it. He and Debbie Collins have written it. With years in Pantomime, Ms. Collins has brought all the hilarity of Pantomime, the music and audience participation.

He told us, 'We'll do this again next year.'

February 8 to 25, the Theatre will present Norm Foster's *Doris and Ivy in the Home*, the ladies spin-off from his hilarious *Jonas and Barry in the Home*.

By the Light of a Story by Kristen Da Silva runs from March 7 to 24, about a young widow grieving her novelist husband's death, has to deal with the 'ghost writer' coming to complete his unfinished book.

Commissioned by Theatre Orangeville, Leslie McCurdy and Cassel Miles have written an original work, The Darktown Strutters' Ball, running April 25 to May 12, a fascinating history of song, dance and story-telling.

And that is what David Nairn is sure it is all about.

To purchase a subscription, go to www.theatreorangeville.ca or call the box office 519-942-3423, also located at 87 Broadway.